



CenterPoint Energy Declares \$0.10 Dividend

HOUSTON, March 3, 2005 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- CenterPoint Energy, Inc.'s (NYSE: CNP) board of directors today declared a dividend of \$0.10 per common share, payable on March 31, 2005, to shareholders of record as of the close of business on March 16, 2005. This is in addition to the \$0.10 per share dividend declared on January 26, 2005, and payable on March 10, 2005.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20020930/CNPLOGO>)

This action was taken to address technical restrictions that might limit the company's ability to pay a regular dividend during the second quarter of this year. Due to the limitations imposed under the Public Utility Holding Company Act, the company may declare and pay dividends only from earnings in the specific quarter in which the dividend is paid, absent specific authorization from the Securities and Exchange Commission. As a result of the seasonal nature of its utility businesses, the second quarter historically provides the smallest contribution to the company's annual earnings. The dividend declared today recognizes that first quarter earnings generally provide a significant contribution to the company's annual earnings and are expected to be sufficient to support both the regular and the additional first quarter dividend declared today. This additional first quarter dividend is in lieu of the company's regular second quarter dividend.

CenterPoint Energy, Inc., headquartered in Houston, Texas, is a domestic energy delivery company that includes electric transmission & distribution, natural gas distribution and sales, interstate pipeline and gathering operations and an electric generation business that the company is under a contract to sell. The company serves nearly five million metered customers primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas. Assets total about \$17 billion after giving effect to the first step in the sale of Texas Genco Holdings, Inc. With more than 9,000 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 130 years. For more information, visit the Web site at <http://www.CenterPointEnergy.com> .

This news release includes forward-looking statements. Actual events and results may differ materially from those projected. The statements in this news release regarding future events and other statements that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements. Factors that could affect actual results include the financial performance CenterPoint Energy, the timing and impact of future regulatory decisions, and other factors discussed in CenterPoint Energy's Form 10-Ks for the period ended Dec. 31, 2003, Form 10-Qs for the periods ended March 31, 2004, June 30, 2004, and Sept. 30, 2004, and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

SOURCE CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

media, Leticia Lowe, +1-713-207-7702, or investors, Marianne Paulsen, +1-713-207-6500, both of CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

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